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TRAIL & LANDSCAPE



*A Publication Concerned With
Natural History and Conservation*

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

Editor

Karen McLachlan
Hamilton

Production Assistant

Mailing Team

Sarah Anderson
Louis L'Arrivee

Associate Editor

Luke Périard

Mailing Team

Coordinator

Sarah Anderson

Diane Lepage

Dave Smythe

Verna Smythe

Henry Steger

Publications Mail Registration # 09798

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

— Founded 1879 —

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Ann Mackenzie

Objectives of the Club: To promote the appreciation, preservation and conservation of Canada's natural heritage; to encourage investigation and publish the results of research in all fields of natural history and to diffuse the information on these fields as widely as possible; to support and co-operate with organizations engaged in preserving, maintaining or restoring environments of high quality for living things.

Club Publications: THE CANADIAN FIELD-NATURALIST, a quarterly devoted to reporting research in all fields of natural history relevant to Canada, and TRAIL & LANDSCAPE, a quarterly providing articles on the natural history of the Ottawa Valley and on Club activities.

Field Trips, Lectures and other natural history activities are arranged for local members; see "Coming Events" in this issue.

Membership Fees: Individual (yearly) \$40

Family (yearly) \$45

Student (yearly) \$20

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THE OTTAWA FIELD-NATURALISTS' CLUB

Box 35069, Westgate P.O. Ottawa, Ontario K1Z 1A2

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TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

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Volume 46 Number 2
April - June 2012

Welcome New Members / <i>Henry Steger</i>	42
"Golden Anniversary" Membership List 1943 - 2012 / <i>Henry Steger</i>	43
President's Perspective, Spring 2012 / <i>Ann MacKenzie</i>	44
Financial Statements for the Fiscal Year Ending September 30 2011 / <i>Frank Pope</i>	46
The 133 rd Annual Business Meeting and the Committees for 2012 / <i>K. McLachlan Hamilton</i>	48
The Freshwater Sponges and Other Aquatic Marvels of Westboro Beach / <i>Michael Davidson</i>	52
The Doug Tarry Bird Study Awards for Young Ornithologists / <i>Long Point Bird Observatory</i>	55
What is This? – The Identification / <i>Henry Steger</i>	56
The Landscape of Western Ottawa / <i>David C. Seburn and Kari Gunson</i>	57
Excursion to Dominion Springs and Mer Bleu, 1879	60
The Butterflies of Larose Forest / <i>Christine Hanrahan</i>	64
Help Needed for Water Chestnut Removal	76
Volunteers Needed for the Monarch Waystation / <i>Diane Lepage</i>	76
Beginner's Guide to Dragonflies / <i>Linda Jeays</i>	77
Peregrine Falcon Watch hopes for hatchlings—and volunteers—this year / <i>Anouk Hoedeman</i>	79
Passing of <i>Passer domesticus</i> ? / <i>Jack Holliday</i>	80
Fabulous Fall Fungi / <i>Richard Aaron</i>	82
The OFNC Soirée	82
Coming Events	83

Welcome New Members

Ottawa Area

James Annis & Family	Tejal Mistry
David Blaine	Faye Posmituk
Lisa Byrne	Peter Ross
Michael T. Carlon & Family	Trina Rytwinski
Kevin Chapman	Richard Sheppard & Family
Owen Clarkin	Jamie Sommerville
Christopher Clunas	Hannah Volt
Deborah Grinnell	Hedrik Waihelka
Diane Jones	Jerzy Wojcicki
Sherry McPhail & Family	

Gatineau Area

Winston Cox & Family

Alberta

Dwayne Lepitzki

Ontario

David L. Goodwin
Liv Monck-Whipp

United States

Eastern Coyote Research

Henry Steger
Chair, Membership Committee
February 2012

“Golden Anniversary” Membership List 1943 - 2012

Henry Steger^{}*
Membership Chair

Joined in

1943	C. Stuart Houston	Saskatoon SK
1943	Sheila Thomson	Ottawa ON
1946	Dr. Jack M. Gillett	Ottawa ON
1948	Enid Frankton	Ottawa ON
1948	Mr. David Erskine	Willowdale ON
1950	H.G. Lumsden	Aurora ON
1951	Dr. E.L. Bousfield	Mississauga, ON
1954	Yvonne & James F. Bendell	Clayton ON
1956	Dr. Charles D. Bird	Eskine AB
1956	J.W. Holliday	Ottawa ON
1957	R.E. Bedford & Family	Ottawa ON
1957	Joe E. Bryant	Ottawa ON
1958	F.R. Cook	Ottawa ON
1960	Dr. A.J. Erskine	Sackville NB
1960	V. Bruce Collins	Bancroft ON
1960	Dr. G.R. & D. Hanes	Carleton Place ON
1961	R.W. Nero	Winnipeg MB
1962	Jo Ann Mackenzie	Surrey BC
1962	Dr. V. Lewin	Heriot Bay BC

President's Perspective, Spring 2012

Part of the Naturalist Family

Organizations, like people, need to have a sense of their place relative to others. It gives them guidance regarding what they should or should not be doing, when to speak up, when to play an active role and when to let others lead the charge. So, where does the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club fit with respect to the larger naturalist community?

First, let me clarify that I am speaking about field-naturalists clubs and not the myriad of other environment-related organizations around.



In very simplistic terms, and as you probably know, Nature Canada is responsible for issues at the national level, and therefore headquartered in Ottawa. Ontario Nature is responsible for issues at the provincial level and therefore headquartered in Toronto. Clubs like ours focus their attention at the local level where they are located.

What does this mean for what we do? Obviously, it would not be appropriate for us to launch a national campaign on a nature-related issue. However, it is our place, even our responsibility, to lead the charge in our own backyard. For example, we are currently putting in place a team for Lac Deschênes Important Bird Area. Lac Deschênes was designated an Important Bird Area as part of a global initiative managed in Canada by Nature Canada and Bird Studies Canada. For the designation to have real meaning, a lot more work is needed. You will be hearing more about this as we start work on determining boundaries, developing conservation plans, raising public awareness, etc. along with our sister organization across the river, Club des Ornithologues de L'Outaouais. Under the umbrella of the national program we will be working to protect our own territory.

Ontario Nature is also an important piece of this jigsaw puzzle. It is composed of many affiliate clubs such as ours as well as having numerous individual members. The OFNC is a member, pays membership/affiliate dues and gets benefits such as

group insurance. If you are not already a member personally, then I would urge you to join. Ontario Nature produces a first-rate magazine on issues pertinent to the naturalist's scene in the province. Their annual general meetings are always informative and a lot of fun. This spring the meeting is being held close to us, making it easier and cheaper to attend than some years. It will be held June 8-10 at the Opinicon Resort near Chaffey's Locks. Check out their website (ontarionature.org) for more details.

As stated before, Ontario Nature raises issues of provincial concern or gives a provincial slant on broader issues. Recently they were circulating a petition to change the Ontario law that currently allows for the hunting of snapping turtles, a threatened species. We were promoting it at our monthly meetings and on our website.

One of the interesting aspects of Ontario Nature is their regional groups. The OFNC is part of their Ontario East Region. They organize meetings twice a year to allow for the sharing of information, best practices, addressing common problems, etc. In addition, this allows the clubs in the eastern part of the province to know each other better and sometimes help each other. You may have occasionally noticed joint outings with these other clubs. While the OFNC puts funds into the purchase by the Nature Conservancy of the Wolf Grove property in Almonte, it was the Mississippi club who agreed to manage it. Good team work. The Kingston club is responsible for the Owl Woods on Amherst Island but our club has always enjoyed outings there. Last year we supported them in their study of how best to manage the woods. Again, working together for shared values.

The relationships, projects and connectivity between all these players ebbs and flows depending on the issues needing attention, the current leadership, and competing priorities. Overall there is a lot going on. As someone who is interested in naturalist issues, I urge you to at least check out the websites of these organizations. You will be impressed at the scope of activities and the passion behind them.

Ann MacKenzie
annmackenzie@rogers.com

Financial Statements for the Fiscal Year Ending September 30 2011

Frank Pope

This is a brief summary of the financial statements as presented at the Annual Business Meeting.

To begin, The Club is in a healthy financial state, our net worth amounting to \$598,000, thanks mainly to bequests.

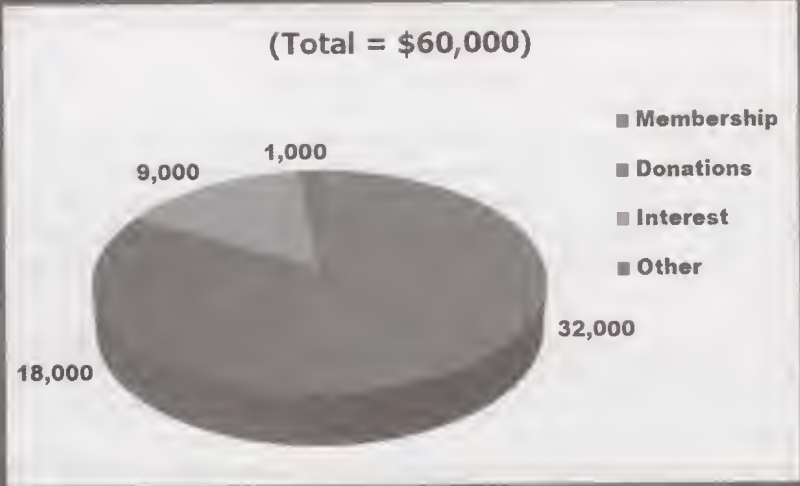
Revenue during the year came to \$60,000 (see chart 1). Most of it (\$32,000) came from membership dues but donations and bequests, at \$18,000, were significant. Interest on our investments came to \$9,000.

Expenses (chart 2) came to \$64,000, resulting in a deficit of \$4,000 for the year. Administration, at \$27,000, accounted for a major portion of expenditures, but the deficit in publishing the *Canadian Field-Naturalist* this year, at \$24,000 was exceptionally high. Note that the deficit comes after income to the *Canadian Field-Naturalist* has been accounted for. The reason for the deficit is that we published six issues in the fiscal year (thank you, retiring editor Francis Cook) and we introduced an electronic version of the *Canadian Field-Naturalist*. This scientific journal is now available in electronic form back to 2003.

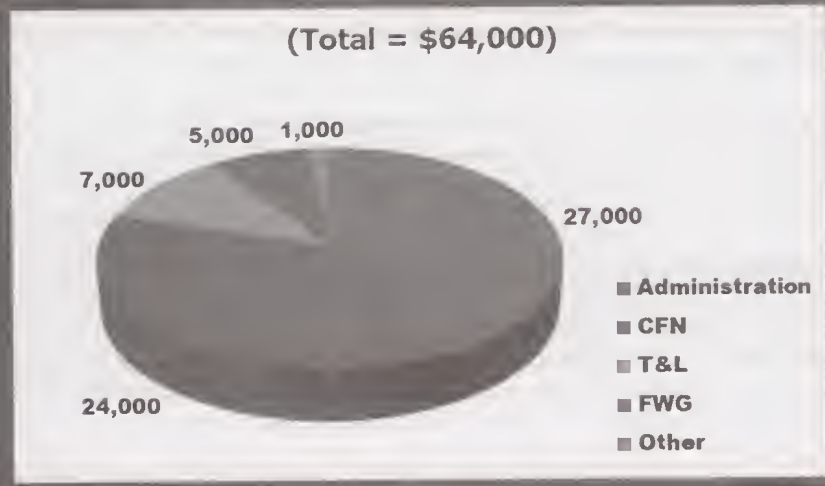
Publishing *Trail & Landscape* cost \$7,000, which is normal. The editor, Karen McLachlan Hamilton has been producing four issues a year like clockwork for years.

Expenses for the Fletcher Wildlife Garden came to \$5,000.

Ottawa Field Naturalists Revenue (\$)



Ottawa Field Naturalists Expenses (\$)



The 133rd Annual Business Meeting and OFNC Committees for 2012

K. McLachlan Hamilton

Any gathering of 10 or more people usually elicits a wide range of ideas and opinions. I have attended many OFNC annual business meetings (ABM) over the years and the 133rd ABM left me rather puzzled. I could not decide if the approximately 25 members who attended this year was a representation a different point of view, or they were a reflection of the membership's wish to point the Club in another direction.

This dichotomy seems most apparent when discussing finances. On the one hand I have heard at previous ABMs the desire for the club to be fiscally responsible and not rely on the interest from the reserves to cover operating costs. This desire resulted in the council opting to increase membership fees, and helped justify publishing *The Canadian Field Naturalist (CFN)* electronically (this will hopefully increase readership which, in turn, will increase membership). On the other hand a desire was expressed to use the reserves to fund projects that reflect the Club's principles and ideals. Both views are valid, but can the Club accomplish both.

Frank Pope's description of the financial statements on page 46-47 is an excellent summary of the Club's status. What I would like to add to his synopsis is that the deficit incurred last fiscal year was paid from the reserves. Also, I would like to mention that with *CFN* now published online, the expected publication costs for 2012 should be considerably less as the circulation costs will be drastically reduced, and the online journal expenses should be minimal. Anyone wishing to see a copy on the financial statement, an electronic copy of the financial statement is available.

For those who would like to see revenues be spent on causes fitting the Club's interests and ideals, it should be noted that the OFNC's other major expense was its donation of \$125,000 which helped towards the purchase of land in the Frontenac Arch.

The annual committee reports are currently on the website and will be published in an upcoming issue of *CFN*; however here are some of the highlights.

Members of the Conservation Committee participated in the Greenbelt Coalition which monitors, and attempts to influence the Greenbelt Master Plan. The Coalition officially opposed the widening of Richmond Road and any additional roads in the

Stony Swap area. They also proposed that significant natural areas, like the Carp Hills/South March Highlands, be added to the Greenbelt system. There was one good news story with respect to the South March development. In 2011 the Ministry of Natural Resources recognized Kizell Drain Wetland complex as provincially significant. This means that since the developers were planning to use this complex to remove water from the development site, and now they can not, further development of this area has been halted. For how long, who knows?

This committee is usually operated by a very small, but dedicated, group of individuals. Tasks tend to be labour-intensive, with a lot of time spent letter writing and attending meetings. Unfortunately the former chair has taken on other more pressing Club responsibilities (also very time consuming), and he could not do both. So that means for the first time since I have been a member, the Conservation Committee chair is vacant. In my opinion, this is a great loss for the Club, but I understand the need to shift our resources to a more pressing need. If anyone is interested in helping, please contact the Club at www.ofnc.ca.

The Fletcher Wildlife Garden (FWG) came in second place for their Monarch Waystation proposal to the Evergreen Foundation, resulting in a \$2500 grant. They used some of the money to improve their nursery, which will help to get the plants ready to be planted in the waystation situated in the Butterfly Meadow. A lot will be happening this summer at the FWG as there are grand plans to register the entire garden as a waystation.

The Canadian Field-Naturalist is pretty much caught up and has gone electronic. This involved the production of six issues in its original print format before beginning the year with its first electronic version (Volume 125). The Club opted for the Open Journal Systems electronic process which, after considerable effort from the incoming Journal Manager, has made the *CFN* readily available to a much wider audience.

The responsibility of the Nominating Committee is to nominate members to key Club positions at the ABM and have members vote on these positions. This did happen, and the following members with their positions were elected: Ann MacKenzie, President; Fenja Brodo, 1st Vice-President; Jeff Skevington, 2nd Vice-President; Ken Young, Treasurer; Annie Bélair, Recording Secretary.

It is the responsibility of Council, at the first meeting after the ABM, to approve committee chairs. This occurred on February 20. New members may be added to a committee during the year if approved by Council. The members listed below were those approved for 2012. Chairs and their contact information appear in bold letters. Any questions, comments, complaints or compliments pertaining to the operations of a committee, or if you would like to serve on a committee, please contact the Chair or speak to a member of the relevant committee.

AWARDS

Eleanor Zurbrigg

613-224-8823

ezurbrigg@sympatico.ca

Ken Allison

Irwin Brodo

Julia Cipriani

Christine Hanrahan

BIRDS

Chris Traynor

613-769-0703

ctraynor59@yahoo.ca

Marie Bedard

Anouk Hoedeman

Bernie Ladouceur

Christina Lewis

Bev McBride

Larry Neily

Rémy Poulin

Gordon Pringle

Jennifer Spallin

Eve Ticknor

BIRD RECORDS

(subcommittee)

Gordon Pringle

613-224-0543

parula@magnum.ca

David Britton

Mark Gawn

Bernie Ladouceur

Christina Lewis

Bev McBride

Larry Neily

Jeff Skevington

Michael Tate

Daniel Toussaint

Chris Traynor

CONSERVATION

vacant

EDUCATION &**PUBLICITY**

Fenja Brodo

613-723-2054

fbrodo@sympatico.ca

Rob Alvo

Susan Barker

Suzanne Deschênes

Gillian Marston

Jeewanthi (Jeewa)

Mendis

Ann Prescott

EXCURSIONS &**LECTURES**

Jeff Skevington

613-823-1970

jeff_skevington@yahoo.ca

Rob Alvo

Holly Bickerton

Fenja Brodo

Julia Cipriani

Hume Douglas

Don Hackett

FINANCE

Barbara Chouinard

barbara_chouinard@

hotmail.com

Dan Brunton

Ann MacKenzie

Gillian Marston

Rémy Poulin

Ken Young

Yj Zhang

FLETCHER**WILDLIFE GARDEN**

Sandra Garland

613-730-0714

sgarland@teksavvy.com

Barry Cottan

Brian Haddon

David Hobden

Diane Lepage

Barbara Riley

Henry Steger

Partner Representative

vacant

MACOUN FIELD**CLUB**

Rob Lee

613-623-8123

rel@magnum.ca

Annie Bélair

Barbara Gaertner

Diane Kitching

Carolyn Seburn

David Seburn

MEMBERSHIP

Henry Steger

613-825-0374

hsteager@bell.net

Dave Smythe

Verna Smythe

PUBLICATIONS

Dan Brunton

613-829-7307

dbruntonn211@rogers.com

Carolyn Callaghan

Paul Catling

Jay Fitzsimmons

Sandra Garland

Tony Gaston

Karen McLachlan

Hamilton

Elizabeth Morton

Frank Pope

Jeff Saarela

Go native!
**Say good-bye to lawn grubs, fertilizers,
sprinklers, and pesticides.**

**Fletcher Wildlife Garden Annual Native
Plant Sale**

Saturday, 2 June 2012, 9:30am - 12:30pm
**(East side of Prince of Wales Drive, just south
of the Arboretum)**

Hundreds of beautiful wildflowers are native to the Ottawa region. We can tell you which ones suit your backyard. Plant a wide variety of native plants to grow a garden that changes from month to month and that creates an ecological balance making herbicides, pesticides, and chemical fertilizers unnecessary. Most of our plants attract butterflies and birds that bring your garden to life.

See our demonstration backyard garden, and pick up free plant lists and "how-to" info on gardening for butterflies, attracting birds, building a backyard pond, and more!

Information: www.ofnc.ca/fletcher

The Freshwater Sponges and Other Aquatic Marvels of Westboro Beach

Michael Davidson



There are freshwater sponges, along with clams and snails, an assortment of different fish, and interesting water plants available to snorkellers visiting Westboro Beach at Lanark and Kirehoffer avenues. The best snorkelling is just downstream, east of the beach facilities, in front of the Skead Mill ruins.

The sponges of Westboro Beach look like algae—a green flat foam layer covering parts of the underwater rocks. Throughout the sponge layer there are small holes or pores. Freshwater sponges often host green algae as endosymbionts and receive a symbiotic benefit from nutrients produced by the algae. This is certainly giving them their distinctive chlorophyll-green colour. The sponges were mainly in shallow water, perhaps to maximize the amount of sunlight they collect.

To the west of the beach, there was a gelatinous bryozoan colony (possibly *Pectinatella magnifica*). It was about the size and shape of a pear and attached to a long strand of a water plant. Like most bryozoan colonies, it looked like an alien jelly blob-brain. Bryozoans, like sponges, are filter feeders and each bryozoan is about one millimetre long. There were also grey gelatinous strings attached to branches and plants—egg spawn from fish or frogs.

Munching on the rocks below the water were snails, gastropods with conical shells about an inch (or 2.5 cm) long. In picking them up you could see the closed trap door, called an operculum, on the bottom of the shell. Snails belong to the class Gastropoda, the largest group in the phylum Mollusca. They are well-known as hosts in the lifecycles of a variety of human and animal parasites, particularly trematodes or flukes—so don't lick them.

There were many of the common Ontario freshwater *Elliptio complanata* clam. These are the usual ones well known to canoeists and kids playing on lake beaches that are brown and about 10 cm long. There were patches of the riverbed where six or eight clams could be seen over a square metre. Their shells have growth rings the same way trees do and the older ones, in deep water, might be teenagers (see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elliptio_complanata).

There were many plants and lots of different species of them. There was the ribbon-like tape grass *Vallisneria americana*, pondweed (*Potamogeton* sp.), and maybe the invasive Eurasian milfoil (*Myriophyllum* sp.) and/or hornwort (*Ceratophyllum* sp.). The water plants grew very thick, like grass in a field and almost reached the surface. When snorkelling, you would swim through the top parts of these plants. I saw lots of fish swimming around them—minnows of different sizes, a sun fish, perch or pumpkinseeds, and a bass. The bottom of the river close to shore is very rocky with broken limestone slabs. As you move away from the shore, the bottom gets sandier.

The best snorkelling is out in front of the Skead Mill ruins, a massive stone foundation about a hundred metres east of the beach. Skead Mills was built in 1869, but was burnt in 1870, then was rebuilt and back in operation by 1873. Senator James Skead was an important man at the time of confederation, being the MP for Carleton County and the president of the Carleton County Society. As a result of the lumber boom of the 1870s, a number of mills and industrial settlements developed along Richmond Road and the Canada Central Railway (CCR) tracks. Skead Mills was one of the largest. In the late 1870s a severe depression swept across Canada and Skead's mills went bankrupt. E.B. Eddy bought the mill in 1880, but it burnt down a few years later and this time was not rebuilt.

In front of the Skead Mills foundation, there is a rock-and-log crib that served as an

anchoring island, used long ago, to tie up the log booms that held floating logs for the mill. The crib is about four metres square, built with logs 60 cm in diameter. It was filled with rocks, some of which are almost a metre in diameter, that when sunk would hold the crib in place. It looks like the work of giants, very looming and impressive to swim beside, almost to the point that I was apprehensive to get too close to it. The men who built it did magnificent work but it must have been brutal. This crib, sitting above the water, is only one of a series. Air photographs from the 1940s (See Granger, 2005, front piece photographs) show a dozen or more of these rock cribs that are now below water level throughout the river in that area. I swam by and visited three or four of them.

There was a 19th century "Pease" firebrick from the mills a way out in the water. It was likely from the mill's boiler house. Googling the brick revealed that it went back to about 1870 and was a product of the Victorian entrepreneur Henry Pease and his brickworks in England. The resort town of Saltburn by the Sea was built using many of these white bricks. It has come a long way, and it is now in my backyard.

The visibility through the water on the day I was there in August 2011 was very poor. The water was full of the smallest particles of floating green algae and I could only see clearly four or five feet (approximately 1.3 metres) away. The sun shone beautifully through the water, like illuminated rays. Ottawa is lucky with its river and water; there is not a whole lot upstream from us. Some times of the year the water is tea-colour brown, but that is from dissolved organic matter produced by decomposing plants. The river is apparently also rich in iron supplied by run-off from the Canadian shield.

When I snorkel, I usually have the following gear: a snorkel and mask (of course), a short-style wet suit, flippers, and a life jacket. I really recommend wearing a life jacket while snorkelling. With a jacket you can just swim or kick your way around while expending zero effort maintaining your buoyancy. If you want to adjust your mask you can just roll over onto your back and your face will be well above the water. With a short-style wet suit (they are about \$80 at Canadian Tire), you can spend an hour in the water without getting too cold, plus it protects you from minor scratches from rocks or branches. One of the dive shops around town can help you find a good mask and flippers. Sometimes I bring leather garden gloves with me so I can pull myself along the rocks on the bottom. On this trip I didn't. They would have been nice to have, especially around the rock cribs, with the threatening looking old logs covered with slime and rusted iron spikes.

Amateur freshwater aquatic biologists are encouraged to visit Westboro Beach and snorkel there and see all these natural wonders. As an added bonus, after your swim, you can visit the first class but reasonably priced licensed cafe for veggie burgers

and beer. When I was there they were playing Bob Marley reggae music. Sweet.

Resources and Literature Consulted:

- Andy's Northern Ontario Wildflowers - Flowering Plants that Grow In Shallow Open Water <http://www.ontariowildflower.com/lakes.htm>.
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 - Ottawa River Heritage Designation Committee. 2005. Canadian Heritage River—Ottawa River. http://ottawariver.org/html/news/whatsnew_e.html.
 - Rook, Earl J.S. 2002. Aquatic Plants of the North. <http://www.rook.org/earl/bwca/nature/aquatics/>.
-

The Doug Tarry Bird Study Awards for Young Ornithologists

Long Point Bird Observatory

This award offers people aged 13-17 "hands-on" training in field ornithology. Participants learn about bird systematics, avian behaviour and population dynamics. Regular field trips, slide shows and some nocturnal field work is included. The workshop will be held 4-12 August at the Long Point Bird Observatory.

Interested individuals can obtain information and application forms from:
lpbo@birdscanada.org.

Deadline for applications is 30 April.

What is This? – The Identification

Henry Steger

The “mystery” plant in the previous issue of *T&L* has been identified as Swamp Candles (*Lysimachia terrestris*). It is a fairly common plant of swamps and edges of ponds and lakes. The star-shaped flowers are yellow, borne in a raceme about the top of the plant in mid-summer.



Late in the season reddish bulbils resembling caterpillars can form in the leaf axils. These fall to the ground and develop into new plants. Identification of the plant in late summer or fall is difficult for the amateur because the latter stage of the plant is not mentioned in the more common wildflower identification guidebooks, for example, Newcombe and Peterson.

Thanks to the following for identifying this plant: George Bryant, Dan Brunton, Paul Catling, Frédéric Coursol, Brenda Kostiuk, and Stefano Viola.

The Landscape of Western Ottawa

David C. Seburn¹ and Kari Gunson²

While conducting research on the Western Chorus Frog (*Pseudacris triseriata*) in western Ottawa (Seburn and Gunson in press) we examined the landscape of this area using a geographic information system (or GIS). GIS is a powerful computing tool that makes it possible to analyze a variety of habitat characteristics of a given area.

We all know that the landscape of western Ottawa is highly variable, but by using a GIS we were able to quantify that landscape. In this article we present a look at the forest, wetland and agricultural cover of this area.

For our purposes we defined western Ottawa as all of the city of Ottawa west of the 416 highway. This includes urban/suburban areas like Kanata and Stittsville as well as smaller communities like Richmond, Carp, Fitzroy Harbour and Constance Bay. It also includes natural areas such as Fitzroy Provincial Park, Stony Swamp, Shirleys Bay, and the South March Highlands. In total, western Ottawa occupies an area of approximately 600 km².

Land use information was obtained from the Southern Ontario Land Resource Information System (SOLRIS). SOLRIS represented the landscape in 15 × 15 m pixels from the year 2000 to 2003, and it was derived from a combination of satellite imagery, topographic maps, and aerial photography (Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources 2007). We considered only three types of land use for this paper:

- 1) Forest. SOLRIS defined this as >60% tree cover, including plantations.
- 2) Wetland. Defined as any wetland ≥ 0.5 ha in area.
- 3) Agriculture. Defined as intensive croplands as well as old fields and forest clearings.

The area for each land use class was calculated for 104 random, non-overlapping circles with a 1.0 km radius. The areas for each land use class were then converted to a percentage for each of the circles. The area of these 104 circles is over 300 km² so we sampled over half of the landscape. We used ArcMap 10.0 for all spatial analyses.

¹ Seburn Ecological Services, davidseburn@sympatico.ca

² Eco-Kare International, kegunson@eco-kare.com

As expected, land use in western Ottawa is highly variable. For example, at our 104 randomly selected locations, the amount of forest cover varied from 0-69% (Table 1). What does that mean? It means there are areas of west Ottawa with absolutely no forest cover and there is no area with more than 69% forest cover, at this scale. Obviously if we selected a smaller scale (say a radius of 100 m) there would likely be areas with higher amounts of forest cover as a smaller wooded area could fill a small circle. We specifically selected a 1.0 km radius to cover larger areas and be more representative of a landscape rather than just a small area.

Table 1. Land use cover values in western Ottawa.

Land use	Median (%)	Range (min – max)
Agriculture	51	5-96
Forest	17	0-69
Wetland	12	0-74

Overall, the landscape of western Ottawa has a median³ value of 12% wetland cover, 17% forest cover, and 51% agricultural cover (Table 1). In other words, forest cover is typically less than 20% in western Ottawa and wetland cover is typically only slightly more than 10%. There are certainly a few areas with high levels of forest and wetland cover but overall, western Ottawa is a highly agricultural landscape.

The range of values and the median provide some insight into how the landscape varies but they don't allow us to see the patterns. To do this, we constructed land use accumulation curves for the three types of habitat (Figure 1). These curves show what percentage of the landscape has a certain percentage of habitat cover. How do we read these curves? It is easy to see that forest cover and wetland cover have very similar curves. Reading along the bottom axis (landscape cover), we can see that 60% of the landscape has no more than 20% forest or wetland cover. Or to put it another way, only 40% of the landscape has more than 20% forest or wetland cover. And only 20% of the landscape has more than 30% forest or wetland cover. It is stunning to think that 80% of the landscape has no more than 30% forest cover. And while some areas have up to 69% forest cover (Table 1), less than 5% of the landscape has more than 50% forest cover. Similarly, while some areas have up to 74% wetland cover (Table 1) only 10% of the landscape has more than 50% wetland cover.

³ The median differs from the mean (or average) in that it is the middle value in a series of ordered numbers. It is less likely than the mean to be biased by a few very large values.

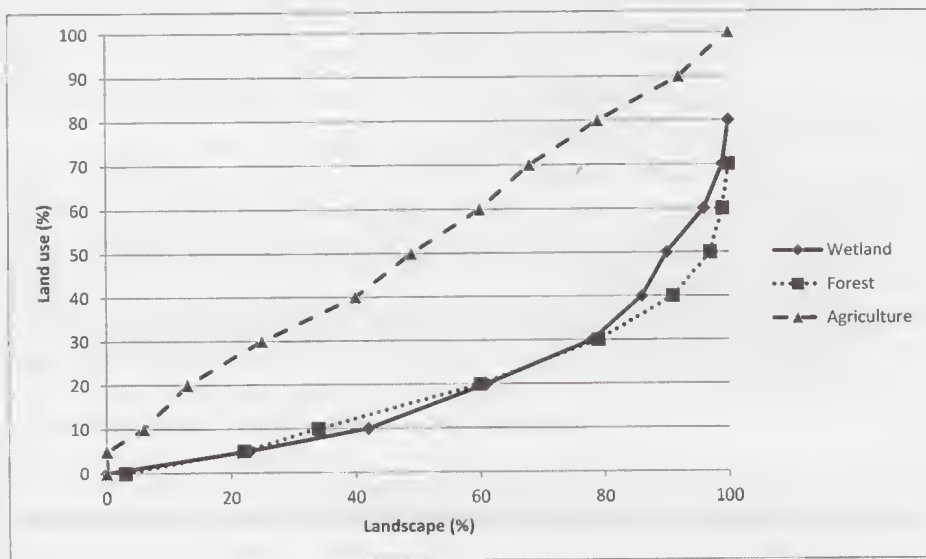


Figure 1. Cumulative land use cover in western Ottawa.

The curve for agriculture clearly shows what occupies most of the landscape. There are a few noteworthy things about the agricultural cover. First of all, while there are a few parts of western Ottawa with 0% forest or wetland cover (Table 1), there is no portion of western Ottawa without agriculture. All 104 points in our sample had at least 5% agricultural cover. Second of all, there are parts of the landscape (10% of it, in fact) with more than 90% agricultural cover. That means that 1 in 10 of the circles we randomly placed on the map have over 90% of the "pie" devoted to agriculture.

While these data provide a snapshot of what the landscape is like in western Ottawa, the data do have limitations. First of all, the habitat mapping is such that it cannot discern wetlands less than 0.5 hectares in size. Half a hectare is just over 1 acre so a lot of important wetlands were not included in our totals. Also keep in mind that the agricultural land use class is quite broad, including both croplands as well as old

fields. Old fields are important habitat for a variety of species (e.g. grassland birds) and so we should not assume that much of western Ottawa is an ecological wasteland just because it was classed as agriculture. It is also important to keep in mind that the entire western Ottawa landscape includes some significant urban areas. Areas such as Kanata and Stittsville would tend to lower the median values for forest and wetland cover. If these areas were excluded from our analysis, then the median forest and wetland cover would increase. Of course, likely the median value for agriculture would also increase.

While there are still significant natural areas in western Ottawa, we could improve the amount of forest and wetland cover.

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Excursion to Dominion Springs and Mer Bleu, 1879

Foreword:

Just months after the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club was established, the Daily Citizen of Tuesday July 22, 1879 printed the following story titled "Ottawa Field Naturalist Club: Excursion to Dominion Springs and Mer Bleu." More on the history of Dominion Springs, renamed Carlsbad Springs in 1906, is available at the website www.carlsbadsprings.ca. Interested readers can learn about the history of the Club from Daniel F. Brunton's 2004 "Origin and History of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club" in Volume 18, No.1 of *The Canadian Field Naturalist*, available online.

On Saturday morning two large vans filled with members of the club and their friends drove out to the above-mentioned places. The road, after crossing Cumming's Bridge, follows a short distance the course of the Rideau of which some

pretty glimpses are obtained at Hurdman's Bridge. It then winds eastwardly, through a somewhat varied and fairly settled country, through out which the prospects seem good for an abundant harvest. Owing to the frequent and copious showers of the present summer, the woods have an unwonted luxuriance and freshness of foliage for the season and the waste fields are profusely covered with various showy plants, producing in some instances wide patches of colour pleasing to the eye. Masses of yellows, pinks, and whites relieve the shades of green and brown, but as they are chiefly the result of a too liberal crop of thistles, daisies, mustard, buttercups, &c., they do not give as much credit to the thrift of the owner of the soil, as they give colour to the landscape.

However, most of the cultivated farms seem well kept, and some very fine fields were noticed bearing their rich burden of rapidly ripening wheat and barley, oats, corn or potatoes. The hay crop seemed pretty heavy and the workers were busy in the meadows with mower, rake and cart and a delicious perfume was wafted up from the fresh cut grass. The drive, altogether, was a very pleasant one, but somewhat lengthened owing to the roughness of the latter part of the road, indeed the party were witnesses of a breakdown which befell a cartload of natives traveling in the same direction, which resulted in the old grey mare falling across and smashing the shaft and the old woman taking a sudden exit from the vehicle; luckily no bones were broken, and damages were repaired with cord and twine.

It was after the noon day hour when the party reached the Springs which have been closed since the burning of the hotel two years ago, but were on this occasion thrown open through the kindness of the proprietor. Vice-president W.D. LeSueur informed the members before they separated of the programme for the day, stating that the first proceeding would be to inspect and test the waters of the Springs, which owed their beneficial properties to chlorides and sulphur of potassium and sodium, associated with other small quantities of other minerals in solution. After luncheon, the party were to proceed to Mer Bleu, where a couple of hours would be spent, enabling the botanists to collect its treasures. At four o'clock the party would reassemble at the Springs and the collection would be examined and remarks offered on any rare or curious specimen found.

Warning was given of the danger of being lost in the swamp, owing to its extent and the sameness of its features. Our readers may all remember the case of two children lost here a few years ago, and who were not found until 9 and 10 days afterwards, despite the diligent search of a large body of men. However, the present party had with them Mr. Heron, who was connected with the survey made at one time by the Ontario government with a view to draining this basin, and has for years been thoroughly acquainted with it, and the Secretary carried with him a horn of enormous tooting power for recalling wanderers.

The entrance was found rather miry, but by the aid of poles, roots and branches the difficulty was surmounted with no worse results than some wet feet—an inconvenience which most of the party afterward shared. Once in the Mer itself, the walking, though somewhat damp and fatiguing, was safe and clean, the foot bed being composed of dense layer of Sphagnum moss, among which grew numerous plants indigenous to such localities, over which flitted numbers of small butterflies and other insects, also local.

Under the living moss are some twenty feet of deposits, composed chiefly of decayed moss and other plants, the upper portions porous and perfectly saturated with water, the lower compressed, solidified and converted into peat by pressure. The party went some distance across the spongy moss, in which the feet sank deeply to a dry sandy ridge (called Poplar Island) crowned with white birches, most of which have been fire-killed. Here the vegetation was very different to that of the lower formation, as was to be expected. Satisfied with the extent and results of their exploration, the members at the appointed hour retraced their steps, many laden with pitcher plants, royal terns[sic] etc. for stocking ferneries, while botanical cases were full to overflowing.

Crossing the fields, a halt was made at a farmhouse, and copious draughts of milk or cold spring water (not mineral), or a combination of both, were quaffed with genuine relish. On once more reaching the Springs, their several summer houses afford a grateful rest and shelter after the toilsome and warm walk of the past three hours. The waters were again investigated and even the few who had pronounced them "perfectly disgusting" before, now drank instead of sipping them with "uplifted nose," evidently finding their flavour improve on acquaintance, as is certainly the case.

The sulphur seemed the favourite; its waters are beautifully cool and clear, with bubbles of gas frequently rising through them to the surface. Close at hand is the gas spring, above which has been placed a large receiver, with numerous gas burners. Unluckily the pipes are at present blocked up, but even gas still escapes to prove that it does burn. The saline spring is only a few yards away, and has a much more decided flavour than the sulphur. After a few seconds pumping its waters (rising from 300 feet below the surface) become intensely salt, reminding one strongly of a mouthful of sea water, taken while buffeting in the waves of the Atlantic. But the "winding horn" has wound and been re-wound, and the summer houses are left for the platform without, upon the raised stage of which Vice-President Fletcher has taken his position, with a view to giving a synopsis of the day's proceedings.

He endorses Mr. LeSueur's remarks of the properties of the springs and proceeds to give a brief outline of the Mer Bleu, which tract of some 5,000 acres is supposed to have been once a lake but which has gradually in the course of long ages filled with

deposits of vegetable matter, chiefly sphagnum mosses, which, as had been seen during their ramble, grew most quickly and luxuriantly in wet places. He then spoke of the immense beds of peat which underlaid the present expanse of moss and shrubs, composed in a less compact and solidified state of the constituents of coal; or the processes of cutting and compressing it; of the fact that peat was used for sometime on the Grand Trunk and other interesting particulars of its value as fuel, showing that should be the present difficulties in the way of its manufacture and use be surmounted these beds would be of immense value as fuel producers.

He then proceeded to speak learnedly and well of the variety of plants which are peculiar to these semi-marshy basins and described briefly several rare and curious specimens which had rewarded the damp hunt therein. First there was the *saracenia* or pitcher plant which is found here in large numbers. The curiously shaped leaves, mottled with green and red, are found on clear inspection to have the inside of the lips covered with fine hairs all pointing downward, while just below is a bare and very smooth bank. Any insect alighting or creeping on this hairy lip naturally walks downward and tumbles in, and being unable to reascend the bare space is inevitably drowned in the water which is contained in the pitcher. To this there are two exceptions, one a fly whose larva lives in the leaf upon the bodies of the victims; the other a larva of a small yellow moth which can crawl over any part of the leaf at will.

Another plant, which is extremely rare, was a small orchid, with a remarkably long name, referring to which he explained the principle on which such apparently difficult names were found, and of the ease with which they were learned, when the connection with the habits or appearance of the plant was once known. With reference to the small but wonderful plant *drosera*, he pointed out the manner in which when an insect alights upon the surface of the leaf, it is hampered by the viscous secretion upon the hairs, while the leaf at once closes over it, the fringe of hairs along the margin interlocking. In this close-fisted grasp the fly or ant is kept until all its juices are extracted.

Mr. Darwin has recently written a book on these curious carnivorous plants, describing the numerous experiments made with a view to determining whether they really gain the absorbed animal juices. The results of the experiments showed that those fed with animal matter gained in every way over those who were left to a strictly vegetable manner of life.

Mr. Fletcher concluded by recommending to all present to the study of one or other branches of natural history, proposing to the ladies worthy attention. At the conclusion of his remarks he was warmly applauded for the interesting points brought forward and their baskets and other traps being collected the stages were again entered, and after another very pleasant drive the city was reached just as twilight was fading into night.

The Butterflies of Larose Forest

Christine Hanrahan



Baltimore checkerspots, mating pair.

Introduction

Larose Forest, 45 minutes east of Ottawa, has become quite a mecca for butterfly watching in recent years. The butterfly list for the forest, as of autumn, 2011, stands at 69 species (see appendix), which represents roughly 67% of the 103 species found within the OFNC's 50km study area as reported by Layberry (2007). Not only is the great diversity a big draw for butterfly enthusiasts, but Larose is also known for several species considered uncommon to rare in the district; these are featured below. This article is intended as a quick overview of some of the species found in Larose (including the just-mentioned "specialties"), and of the locations that are most productive for butterfly watching.

Butterflies not only occur in great variety here, but sometimes in great abundance. Of course, some species have limited distribution with small populations in Larose, and many are just that much more difficult to find. Big, showy species like the swallowtails, admirals, the larger fritillaries, are easy to spot, but many such as the skippers, must be searched for carefully and with great patience. Of course, that is all part of the fun of watching butterflies.

Those unfamiliar with Larose Forest may find it peculiar that a site described as forest should have so many species of butterflies. While various butterflies *are* found in wooded locations, most are denizens of open, sunny, floriferous sites, and wetland and woodland edges. The main block of Larose Forest (that between Limoges and Bourget) is approximately 7,280 hectares, and over 30% of that is wetland. There are numerous unpaved roads and innumerable trails and tracks, all of which give access to excellent habitats. The roadsides, and many of the trails, provide sunny, open, edge habitat, with a vast array of nectar-rich wildflowers (both native and non-native) and an abundance of larval foodplants. In addition to nectar sources, butterflies need minerals, which can be obtained from the damp, muddy or sandy sections of trails, and from scat deposited by mammals such as fox, coyote, raccoon, etc. Little wonder, then, that with so much to attract them, Larose Forest is home to many butterfly species.

Butterfly watchers are responsible, but sometimes we need to remind ourselves not to ruin sensitive habitat when looking for a species, and the admonishment to stay on the path always applies.

The Butterflies

Of the 69 species recorded from Larose Forest, many are also common and widespread across the Ottawa district. The species discussion below, focuses on those species that are considered to be "specialities" of the forest; that is, they are uncommon or rare in the Ottawa district, but can be found here with some success and a great deal of patience. For the most part, they are concentrated into specific and often small, areas. Best butterfly locations are given further on in the article.

Mulberry Wing (*Poanes massasoit*) is known only from a few locations within the 50 km area, and several more just outside the boundaries. It is not only scarce in this district, but is listed provincially as an S3 species (vulnerable in Ontario; 80 or fewer occurrences) by the Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC). This species is closely associated with narrow-leaved Sedges (*Carex* spp.) and therefore, with wetland habitats (Cech and Tudor 2005; Layberry et al 1982).

It has been reported from three locations in the forest, all within fairly close proximity of each other. First found by Ross Layberry in 1984 at the north end of

Concession 10 (pers comm), it was relocated at the south end of the same road, near the Clarence-Cambridge Rd., in 2006, where it has been seen in very small numbers in each of the last six years. In 2011, several Mulberry Wings were found along Clarence-Cambridge Rd.



Mulberry Wing skipper

just west of Concession 10. The small colony now (seemingly) well established at the south end of Concession 10, is restricted to an area alongside a little wetland, about 400 metres from Clarence-Cambridge Rd.

Dion Skippers (*Euphyes dion*) are spreading, with 15 known colonies (as of 2007) in the Ottawa district according to Layberry (2007). However, he considers them still locally uncommon. This is a change from their 1982 status, when Layberry et al, noted that Dion Skippers were “extremely rare, extremely local” and “Prior to 1980 it was not known to occur closer to Ottawa than the Kingston area.” Dion Skippers, as with the above species, are closely tied to sedges, and are found together with the Mulberry Wings, along Concession 10 (see above). They have also been seen along the south side of Clarence-Cambridge Rd. in the vicinity of Concession 10.

Pepper and Salt skipper (*Amblyscirtes hegon*) is a tiny brownish skipper known from very few locations in the 50 km study area. On the Ontario side, it has been found primarily from Larose Forest (with one other recent observation from the Mer Bleue area), and from five locations on the Quebec side (Ross Layberry, pers comm). I know of five locations in Larose for this species which I first found in early June, 2007, along the Tours Rd. during the 2007 Larose Forest BioBlitz. A week later, the species was found again, this time along the Perron Trail. Also in 2007, about 4-5 Pepper and Salt Skippers were found in a maple-beech forest,



Pepper and Salt Skipper

on the north side of County Rd. 8 (Champlain Rd.). To the best of my knowledge, no further sightings were reported until 2011, when I saw and photographed one individual on Bertrand Rd. and a few weeks later, two more on Route 200 immediately west of Bertrand Rd and several kilometres south of the above Bertrand sighting. The NHIC has listed Pepper and Salt Skipper as S3?,

indicating that more work is needed to determine if it warrants the "vulnerable in Ontario" status. In 1982, Layberry et al listed this species as rare, and nothing has changed in the intervening years to modify this status. This species favours woodland edges, preferably near wet meadows, and its hostplants are various grasses, including Kentucky blue grass (*Poa pratensis*) and Fowl Mannagrass (*Glyceria striata*) (Cech and Tudor 2005), both of which are common in Larose. Unlike many of the butterflies in this section, Pepper and Salt Skippers seem not to be tied to any one location. Or at least, they have not yet been found in the same area twice.

Delaware Skipper (*Anatrytone logan*) is another species observed in Larose, but only sporadically. It was first discovered in the Ottawa District by Peter Hall in 1998, near Burritts Rapids. It has since spread to many widely scattered locations, including the forest, where it was very common in 2006. That year I found it at three widely separated spots. Since then, it has been primarily recorded on Concession 10, although not every year. While the species is not considered rare in the district, I include it as it is an interesting and noteworthy addition to the Larose butterfly list. This skipper too, has as its hostplants, various grasses, and according to Cech and Tudor (2005) its habitat preferences are varied, including both dry and wet areas (meadows and marshes for example). On Concession 10, it is primarily seen in the

same area as both the Dion and the Mulberry Wing Skippers, that is, near the small wetland at the south end of the concession rd. just north of Clarence-Cambridge.

Eastern Tailed Blue (*Everes comyntas*), once considered rare in the district is now listed as uncommon but widespread (Layberry 2007). It has never been abundant in Larose, although generally found in small numbers each of the last seven years, particularly on Concession 10, about ½ to one km north of Clarence-Cambridge Rd. Its hostplants, various legumes, such as vetch, as well as clovers, are fairly common in Larose, including along Concession 10, and the roadside verges, provide the kind of disturbed open habitats that this species prefers.

Harris's Checkerspot (*Chlosyne harrisii*) butterflies are regarded as common but very local. They have been found in Larose in only a few locations. Their numbers seem to fluctuate annually and in some years they are very scarce in Larose. Once again, Concession 10, from between 1/4 to one km north of Clarence-Cambridge, has been a reliable spot to see this species, as Flat-topped Aster (*Aster umbellatus*), the larval hostplant, grows commonly there. Gagnon Trail, Concession 7, and Clarence-Cambridge Rd. near Concession 7, are also good spots for this species, as *A. umbellatus* is common in these locations (as well as in many other sections of the forest). The above locations also have the kind of moist areas that this species is typically found in.

Satyr Comma (*Polygonia satyrus*) was listed as rare in the 1982 list of Ottawa district butterflies (Layberry et al), and its status has not changed. This butterfly of woodland edges has been reported only once in Larose, and that by Peter Hall on an OFNC field trip along Concession 10 in 2010. The hostplant for the Satyr Comma is said to be Stinging Nettle (*Urtica dioica*), which in some sections of Larose Forest is common.

Best Places to See Butterflies in Larose

All of the roads and trails below are indicated by name on prominent markers at their intersection with Clarence-Cambridge Rd. The five concession roads all run north from the Clarence-Cambridge Rd. On the map, the concession roads are shown with their old names as well as their concession numbers. Bertrand Rd. was until recently, known as Neuf Milles Rd. as shown on the map. Perron Trail was recently called Perron Rd. Concessions 6, 7, 8 and 9 are driveable, if you don't mind narrow, sometimes rutted, sometimes very muddy, roads. Otherwise, it is best to park along Clarence-Cambridge Rd. pulling well off to the side. Bertrand is an easily navigable road. Trails run north and south off Clarence-Cambridge, and east and west off all concession roads. Several trails run west from Bertrand Rd.

Concession 10

Local naturalists know this to be the best butterfly site in the forest, bar none. Like all the concession roads in the forest, it runs north-south. The best section for butterfly watching is the southern end, from Clarence-Cambridge Rd. northward for about a kilometre. Within about 400 metres you come to the first of four small ponds/wetlands (there is also a very extensive wetland at the north end of this road) and it is in this general vicinity that Dion Skipper, Delaware Skipper and Mulberry Wing Skipper are usually found. It is best to walk very slowly up and down this section of the road, focusing primarily on the east side of the road, although don't neglect the west side either. However, most times, I have found these species on the



Concession 10

east side, which is where the wetland is. In addition to these three, many other skipper species occur, such as Arctic (*Carterocephalus palaemon*), Least (*Ancyloxypha numitor*), European (*Thymelicus lineola*), Long-dash (*Polites mystic*), and Broad-winged (*Poanes viator*) skippers. As well, both Eyed Brown (*Satyrodes eurydice*) and Appalachian Brown (*Satyrodes appalachia*) can be found, the former being very common. All of the comma species (*Polygonia*) have been found here on Concession 10, as well as all of the hairstreaks (*Satyrrium*) reported on the Larose

butterfly list. In fact, many of the 69 species on this butterfly list, can be found along Concession 10, which is why it has become such a special location for butterfly aficionados. Harvesters can be found anywhere along this road where extensive alder thickets occur. Opposite a small flooded area, about ½ km from Clarence-Cambridge, a narrow trail leads east. This has always been a very good spot for Henry's Elfin (*Callophrys henrici*) and Eastern Pine Elfin (*Callophrys niphon*), as well as Little Wood-Satyr (*Megisto cymela*), although the latter can be very, very common in dozens of locations within Larose.

Concession 9

The next concession is east of the above, it passes several areas of willow thickets, and, near the north end, an extensive wetland. At the intersection with Route 25 there are a couple of drainage ditches lined with wildflowers, sedges and grasses. I have generally found a good selection of butterflies here, often in pretty good numbers, including fritillaries (all three of the large *Speyeria*), Viceroy (*Limenitis archippus*), White Admirals (*Limenitis arthemis*), Eastern Commas (*Polygonia comma*), Mourning Cloaks (*Nymphalis antiopa*), numerous crescents, both Northern (*Phyciodes cocyta*) and Pearl (*Phyciodes tharos*), as well as Arctic, European, Peck's (*Polites peckius*), Hobomok (*Poanes hobomok*) and Dun Skippers (*Euphyes vestris*). From this intersection south for about ½ km, abundant Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) grows on both sides of the road, and is a good place to find monarch butterflies (*Danaus plexippus*) and their larvae, even in years when they are scarce in the region.

Concession 8

Another good road for butterflies, it is driveable (if you don't mind rutted, sometimes muddy conditions) to its intersection with route 25. At this point there is a medium sized wetland on Concession 8, and a long, deep, wide drainage ditch along Route 25, east of the concession road. Butterflies can be plentiful along here. Delaware Skippers (*Anatrytone logan*), Bronze Coppers (*Lycaena hyllus*), various of the comma species, including especially Eastern Comma, Viceroy, Spring Azure (*Celastrina ladon*), Summer Azure (*Celastrina neglecta*) and Silvery Blue (*Glaucopsyche lygdamus*) are all relatively common.

Perron Trail

Unlike the concession roads, this trail runs south from Clarence-Cambridge Rd. It continues for many kilometres, eventually exiting at Bertrand Rd. After about 1/4 km, the trail passes extensive wetlands on either side, interspersed with open sunny sites where goldenrod is abundant in late summer. Turtlehead, the hostplant for the Baltimore Checkerspot (*Euphydryas phaeton*) grows more commonly along here than in many other easily accessible locations, and hence, Baltimore Checkerspots

can sometimes be present in good numbers. In 2008, I counted over 140 of these checkerspots in one small section of the trail. The wetlands along the first couple of kilometres of the trail attract many butterflies associated with such sites.

Once past the wetlands, the trail enters mixed forest and pine plantations. Where the trail turns sharply east, Pepper and Salt Skippers were found in 2007. While I haven't seen them here since then, there is no reason to give up trying at this location. This is also an excellent spot for the large and eye-catching Silver-spotted Skipper (*Epargyreus clarus*), as there is an abundance of one of its hostplants, Hog Peanut (*Amphicarpa bracteata*) along this portion of the trail.

Bertrand Road

Bertrand Road heads south from Clarence-Cambridge. This long, straight road has wide verges with a variety of grasses and wildflowers, and extensive stands of poplar (*Populus*) and willow (*Salix*). I have found Pepper and Salt Skipper along here (about ½ km south of Clarence-Cambridge), as well as, in some years, very high numbers of the more common skippers, such as Arctic, European, Peck's, Long-dash, and Dun. Other skippers, found in smaller numbers along this road, include Dreamy Duskywing (*Erynnis icelus*), Indian Skipper (*Hesperia sassacus*), and Tawny-edged Skipper (*Polites themistocles*). At the intersection with Martel Rd., Route 200 (unmarked, but a continuation of the east-west Martel Rd.) heads west. This is a trail, not a road, and can be muddy in spots. However, approximately 200 metres from Bertrand, several Pepper and Salt Skippers were found in 2011. This stretch is also a good location for Northern Cloudywing (*Thorybes pylades*), Clouded Sulphur (*Collas philodice*), and all of the blues. After about a kilometre, a boggy site with extensive Sheep Laurel (*Kalmia angustifolia*) occurs on the north side, and here, occasionally, Brown Elfin (*Callophrys augustinus*) has been found.

Other

In addition to the above locations, there are many other places within the forest to find butterflies. Some are not as accessible, many provide similar habitats and plant communities, and hence, similar butterfly species. But there are always surprises to be had. Exploring the banks above the South Nation River in 2010, hundreds of Red Admiral caterpillars (*Vanessa atalanta*) were found on an extensive population of Stinging Nettle. This was in a stellar year for Red Admirals, but nonetheless, I had no idea that there was such a large stand of nettle in the forest. On other occasions, I have found several Coral Hairstreaks (*Satyrus titus*) in a sunny opening in the forest fringed with a number of chokecherries (*Prunus virginiana*). American Coppers (*Lycaena phlaeas*) are reliably found in the old Grant cemetery off Grant Rd. south from Clarence-Cambridge. You will surely discover other locations for various species.

How to get to Larose Forest

Larose Forest is situated about 50 km east of downtown Ottawa. The main block of the forest (between Limoges and Bourget) is bisected by the Clarence-Cambridge Road, sometimes called Clarence-Cambridge Boundary Road, or C-C Rd. for short. The municipality of Clarence-Rockland lies north of the C-C Rd. while to the south is the municipality of La Nation.

Take Highway 417 east toward Montreal. At the Vars Exit (#88), turn left (north) at the T-junction, cross over the 417 and take a quick right onto Russland Rd. This leads, after several kilometres to a T-junction at Limoges Rd. Turn left (north) and follow the road as it curves east. Continue straight (do not go north on Saumure Rd.). You will now be on Clarence-Cambridge Rd. (Confusingly called Indian Creek Rd. for a short distance). From this main east-west road five concession roads lead north, two marked trails lead south (Perron and Gagnon Trails), Bertrand Rd. heads south, and in between are many tracks and trails.

Acknowledgements. I'd like to thank Ross Layberry for his kind help with information on the skippers in Larose Forest and for answering various butterfly-related questions. I am very happy to acknowledge contributions to the Larose Forest butterfly list, by the following: Steve Ansell, Peter Hall, Tom Hanrahan, Ross Layberry, and Diane Lepage.

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Appendix:

Butterflies of Larose Forest

Status: Follows that in the Checklist of the Butterflies of the Ottawa District, Peter Hall, Ross Layberry, and Don Lafontaine, 1996

Provincial status: S3 - Vulnerable in Ontario; 80 or fewer occurrences.

HESPERIIDAE

Epargyreus clarus
Thorybes pylades
Erynnis icelus
Erynnis juvenalis
Carterocephalus palaemon
Ancyloxypha numitor
Thymelicus lineola
Hesperia leonardus
Hesperia sassacus
Polites peckius
Polites themistocles
Polites mystic
Anatrytone logan
Poanes massasoit
Poanes hobomok
Poanes viator
Euphyes dion
Euphyes vestris
Amblyscirtes hegon

PAPILIONIDAE

Papilio polyxenes
Papilio glaucus
Papilio canadensis

PIERIDAE

Pieris oleracea
Pieris rapae
Collas philodice
Colias eurytheme

LYCAENIDAE

Feniseca tarquinius
Lycaena phlaeas
Lycaena hyllus
Satyrrium acadicum
Satyrrium titus

Skippers

Silver-spotted Skipper
Northern Cloudywing
Dreamy Duskywing
Juvenal's Duskywing
Arctic Skipper
Least Skipper
European Skipper
Leonard's Skipper
Indian Skipper
Peck's Skipper
Tawny-edged Skipper
Long-dash Skipper
Delaware Skipper
Mulberry Wing, S3
Hobomok Skipper
Broad-winged Skipper
Dion Skipper
Dun Skipper
Pepper and Salt Skipper, regionally significant, S3?

Swallowtails

Black Swallowtail
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail
Canadian Tiger Swallowtail

Whites and Sulphurs

Mustard White
Cabbage White
Clouded Sulphur
Orange Sulphur

Gossamer-winged Butterflies

Harvester
American Copper
Bronze Copper
Acadian Hairstreak
Coral Hairstreak

Satyrium calannus
Satyrium liparops
Callophrys angustinus
Callophrys henrici
Callophrys niphon
Everes comyntas
Celastrina ladon
Celastrina neglecta
Glaucopsyche lygdamus

NYMPHALIDAE

Speyeria cybele
Speyeria aphrodite
Speyeria atlantis
Boloria silene
Boloria bellona
Chlosyne nycteis
Chlosyne harrisii
Phyciodes tharos
Phyciodes cocyta
Euphydryas phaeton
Polygonia interrogationis

Polygonia comma
Polygonia satyrus
Polygonia faunus
Polygonia progne
Nymphalis vaualbum
Nymphalis antiopa
Nymphalis milberti
Vanessa virginiensis
Vanessa atalanta
Limenitis arthemis
Limenitis archippus
Enodia anthedon
Satyrodes appalachia
Satyrodes eurydice
Megisto cymela
Coenonympha tullia
Cercyonis pegala
Danaus plexippus

Banded Hairstreak
 Striped Hairstreak
 Brown Elf
 Henry's Elf
 Eastern Pine Elf
 Eastern Tailed Blue
 Spring Azure
 Summer Azure
 Silvery Blue

Brush-footed Butterflies

Great Spangled Fritillary
 Aphrodite Fritillary
 Atlantis Fritillary
 Silver-bordered Fritillary
 Meadow Fritillary
 Silvery Checkerspot
 Harris's Checkerspot
 Pearl Crescent
 Northern Crescent
 Baltimore Checkerspot
 Question Mark

Eastern Comma
 Satyr Comma
 Green Comma
 Grey Comma
 Compton Tortoiseshell
 Mourning Cloak
 Milbert's Tortoiseshell
 American Lady
 Red Admiral
 White Admiral
 Viceroy
 Northern Pearly-Eye
 Appalachian Brown
 Eyed Brown
 Little Wood-Satyr
 Common Ringlet
 Common Wood-nymph
 Monarch

69 species

Help Needed for Water Chestnut Removal

As many OFNC members will be aware, the aggressively invasive European Water Chestnut (*Trapa natans*) has been established at Voyageur Provincial Park since 2005. Starting in 2008, the park staff and others have been cutting and removing rosettes of this floating-leaved aquatic plant. Currently, the park is using both mechanical methods (a large harvester) and manual control methods (hand-raking of rosettes). Some OFNC members may have assisted with the manual removal efforts in the past. Significant progress has been made, but volunteers are still welcome!

If you are interested in assisting for a day or more, anytime from mid-June to early September, please contact Darryl White (Phone: 613-674-2825 ext 225), Superintendent at Voyageur Provincial Park. Volunteers need to provide their own canoes, although canoes are available for rental at the park. Small groups are especially encouraged (a campsite can be provided for groups of six or more).

Volunteers Needed for the Monarch Waystation

Diane Lepage

The Fletcher Wildlife Garden will see a lot of changes this year. Apart from their normal activities throughout the garden, there are plans to create a Monarch Waystation on the entire Fletcher Wildlife Garden site. This is possible, due to a grant from the Evergreen Foundation/FIDO. In order to accomplish this, we will need help in planting, site preparation, and other tasks throughout the year. We plan on meeting Wednesday from 6 pm till dusk, and possibly at other times throughout the year. If you have some time and are interested in helping out, please contact Diane Lepage at 613-741-5179. To find out when the next work bee will happen, check out the FWG website (fletcher@ofnc.ca).

Beginner's Guide to Dragonflies

Linda Jeays

In the spring of 2009 I decided to keep a sharp lookout for dragonflies and to pursue some identifications. Unable to find a comprehensive field guide in bookstores, I eventually stumbled across the Stokes "Beginner's Guide to Dragonflies and Damselflies." Since I had everything to learn and \$12.99 (plus tax) to lose, I purchased the pocket-sized guide. It was the best bargain of the year.

With attractive colour photographs on every page and some easy-to-absorb introductory material, this shiny paperback suits the needs of beginners of all ages. Basic information is given on the life cycle of dragonflies, common behaviours and odonate families. Simple line drawings offer general hints on identifying species. Even before you grab your binoculars and put your hat on, you will be thinking about perching postures, flight height, wing patterns and eye positions—not to mention abdominal appendages.

After an initial scrutiny of the Stokes guide, I referred to the Bracken/Lewis 2008 checklist of Ottawa-area Odonata (T&L 42:3) and jotted down in the margin the corresponding page numbers from the purchased guide. Sixty-six local dragonflies and damselflies are covered by Stokes with colour photos and brief diagnostic descriptions. This proved to be plenty for a leisurely but careful beginner to tackle at first. The checklist was useful in indicating the flight season, habitat and status of a particular species in our area.

I soon learned that while wetlands, ponds, rivers and streams are optimal dragon-hunting country, a field, sandy trail, hydro easement, rocky outcrop or farm manure pile usually yielded some interesting finds. Even my own backyard provided surprise encounters.

Watching dragonflies through binoculars, taking digital photos for later identification, or simply stealing up for a close inspection, are all rewarding. As Stokes cautioned, in some cases it was essential to have the dragonfly in hand in order to check the characteristics of the eyes, face, thorax and abdomen. I used the guide and Internet sources for advice on how to hold individuals without injuring them. Even when captive, some species are known to be troublesome for an expert and perhaps impossible for a beginner. Also, practical problems sometimes foil attempts at identification. For example, a mosaic darner may be flying too high above one's head to be seen properly, and when perched can be equally inaccessible

high up in a tree.

Stokes briefly discusses strategies for overcoming surmountable obstacles, and suggests resignation when the enthusiast has to record simply “spiketail species” or “female whiteface.” Quite a few of my own early capture-and-release subjects remained as enigmas, but “easy” distinctive dragonflies such as Common Whitetail and Widow Skimmer—and the spectacular Ebony Jewelwing damselfly—kept the chin up.

Not the least of pleasures are the aerial acrobatics, fierce battles, “wheel-formation” mating, and flights “in tandem” (male guards and hangs on to the female, to ensure that she lays the eggs fertilized by him). Other intriguing behaviours include obelisking. I watched a Dot-tailed Whiteface clasp a horizontal stem with its legs and lift its whole abdomen up vertically. This posture cools the insect by reducing exposure to the sun. Think “Dragon does handstand.”

Stokes says, “Your field trips will be most productive on warm sunny days with little wind.” While this was generally true, one of my most memorable encounters was in pouring rain. I had taken shelter under a tree when, looking just above my head at the bark, I found a Canada Darner also avoiding the storm. Finger-friendly in such cold, wet and dimly-lit conditions, the darner was passive during examination. When the rain stopped and I put it back on the tree trunk, it exhibited wing-whirring behaviour—a rapid beating of the wings in place in order to generate heat.

Of course, the first season of tackling an unfamiliar natural history discipline is always tremendous fun as one learns the new vocabulary, gains fresh insight into the ecosystem, and quickly racks up common species. Whether you are a serious naturalist or a casual observer, for a swift, intelligible and pain-free introduction to dragonflies and damselflies I recommend the Stokes guide.

Note

Five of the guide’s common names are slightly different from the checklist. Cross-reference using scientific names. *Enallagma annexum* is the correct name for the North American species of Northern Bluet.

References

- Bracken, B and Christina Lewis. 2008. A Checklist of the Dragonflies and Damselflies of Ottawa-Gatineau (2008 Update). *T&L* 42(3):115-131.
- Nikula, Blair and Jackie Soncs with Donald and Lillian Stokes. 2002. *Beginner’s Guide to Dragonflies and Damselflies*. Little, Brown and Company, New York, NY. ISBN 978-0-316-81679-3.

Peregrine Falcon Watch hopes for hatchlings—and volunteers—this year

Anouk Hoedeman

Peregrine Falcons have nested in Ottawa since 1997, returning every spring to the Delta Ottawa City Centre Hotel (formerly known as the Crowne Plaza and, before that, the Citadel Inn). In that time, they have laid 46 eggs, hatched 19, and raised six foster chicks. Of these 25 chicks, 16 fledged successfully, meaning they survived their first attempts to fly. This seemingly modest survival rate is actually quite good, since mortality among young birds is normally much higher.

North American Peregrine Falcons were nearly driven to extinction in the 20th century because of pesticides like DDT. Pesticide bans, nest protection and captive breeding and release programs have helped these magnificent raptors slowly re-establish themselves in the wilderness as well as in urban areas, where high-rises mimic cliff ledges and pigeons provide a convenient source of food.

In Ottawa, the many dedicated volunteers of the OFNC's Peregrine Falcon Watch have played a critical role in the raptors' success. The city is a dangerous place for inexperienced falcons, which must quickly learn to manoeuvre above busy streets and between closely spaced buildings. Young birds often end up on the ground or on balconies, stranded and endangered.

The Falcon Watch's main objective is to assist the young birds, if required, as they learn to fly. For two or three weeks every June or July, volunteers station themselves on the streets of downtown Ottawa to keep an eye on the fledglings and do what they can to keep them from harm. Volunteers also record observations about the Peregrine Falcons and educate the public about these impressive birds of prey.

The past two breeding seasons were unsuccessful, so we are crossing our fingers that there will be hatchlings this year, and that we can count on volunteers to once again help us monitor and rescue the young birds. The Falcon Watch runs from sun-up to sundown, seven days a week. Volunteers receive training and work in teams. No one is expected to handle a bird if they are uncomfortable doing so.

If you would like to be an Ottawa Peregrine Falcon Watch volunteer, please email our coordinator at ottawa.falconwatch@gmail.com. We will contact volunteers once chicks have hatched and we can estimate when the fledging period will start. We would appreciate any time you can contribute, even if it's just one shift.

Passing of *Passer domesticus*?

Jack Holliday

Usually at this date, late October, the sparrows, *Passer domesticus*, have gathered in groups of twenty or more. Their domestic chores are finished for the year, their family has been raised, there is an abundance of seeds of all sorts, and they can indulge in one of their favourite enjoyments, what I refer to as "cheep-in." They occupy a selected tree or shrub, usually a well-leaved one, then they begin to "cheep" one and all. It is difficult to observe them, but it seems they hop from twig to twig, all the time singing their one-note "cheep." Quite loud. You may have noticed.

One such gathering is in the shrubbery at the Transpo Station at Tunneys' Pasture. Usually there are about 20-30. Yesterday, I heard, and saw, one. All by himself, as he cheeped away. Those sparrows hopping among the feet of the shoppers in Byward Market are few. Recently I counted only three. The sparrows of my neighborhood, usually at this date gathered in the cedar hedge at the end of the garden, are not there.

In 2010, attempts were made three times with the same result. Just when the young were almost fully grown, they disappeared from the birdhouse.

In 2011, two attempts failed in the same manner. I suspect the crows, common nest robbers are the culprits; or perhaps, a Screech Owl, at night, has reached in and pulled the young birds out? Locally, I didn't see any fledged sparrows.

Sparrows are reputed to have been introduced to the North American continent in the 1800s. In that century, cities were beginning to be illuminated at night by street lights. The early street lamps were fueled by gas. Many species of insects were attracted to the lights and they died by the millions every night, in the cities, under the lights. My understanding of the arrival of *P. domesticus*, is that they were imported to dispose of the dead and dying insects. Whatever the circumstances, sparrows found the conditions excellent for them.

North America was in the "horse age." Horses provided the transport of everything. Cities had thousands of horses. Stables were everywhere. The seeds from the hay and oats, fed to the horses, provided ample year-round food for the sparrows.

Most buildings, then, were made of wood. The wooden cornice around the eaves of structures, had a tendency to rot after a few years. The sparrows quickly discovered entrance of the eaves, and made their nests there, staying warm and safe in the winters.

The cities were paradise for *P. domesticus*. They thrived and spread across the whole of the USA and Canada, wherever humans lived. Actually their success was made possible by us.

When the automobile gradually replaced the horse (there were still many horses in Ottawa in the 1940s), *P. domesticus* came to depend on "scraps" and the proliferation of bird feeders in winter. Bird houses, erected for more desirable species, Tree Swallows, Bluebirds, Purple Martins, became the nesting site for *P. domesticus*. I've seen nestings behind metal flashing of brick chimneys, and in the arching street lights which have an opening underneath. In spite of *P. domesticus*' adaptability, their number seem to be declining hereabouts.

Media reports from England say that the numbers in the UK indicate a worrisome decline there also. One wonders at the cause.

Seemingly many of our once-plentiful birds are scarce, or not seen any longer. Tree Swallows, which arrive from the "south" every April, and were, at one time, with us all summer are not seen. The swallows, Tree and Cliff, which harvested insects over the Ottawa River are absent. This observer saw one Tree Swallow and one Chimney Swift flying southward in mid-August, where once they were in the thousands. No fledged American Robins have been seen for two summers.

True, the Black and White, Ring-billed Gull, American Crow, and Canada Goose numbers increase, but even there I've noticed that the five crows that "owned" the territory around my home are gone as of September. There were an adult pair, one offspring from the previous year, and two from this year's hatching. They came daily for food scraps. Then they ceased to come. I did see one dead crow 100 yards from my home. Other crows, more wary, are arguing over which pair will claim the territory. One wonders if Rachael Carsons "Silent Spring" is coming to pass?

If our common sparrow, *Passer domesticus*, does disappear, we'll certainly miss them.

Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,
A hero perish, or a sparrow fall.

Alexander Pope, "An essay on Man."

Fabulous Fall Fungi

Due to popular demand, this three-day workshop is being offered again this year. The main focus is on learning to identify the wide variety of mushrooms and other fungi growing at this time of year (in 2011 we collected and identified 135 species!). There will be complemented by lectures and discussions on fungal ecology, edibles and medicinals, and how to demystify the scientific names. If time permits, we will also look at slime moulds, a fascinating group of organisms traditionally studied by mycologists. Suitable for all levels, this workshop is a wonderful opportunity to become better acquainted with the wonderful world of fungi. Maximum 12 adults.

October 3-5, 2012
Queen's University Biological Station

All-inclusive workshop fee: \$295 (includes instruction, all meals, accommodation, and printed handouts.). For more details and to register:
www.queensu.ca/qubs/events.html.

The OFNC Soirée

**Saturday 21 April
7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
St. Basil's Church**

Join us for some fun at our annual wine and cheese party.

Celebrate with the winners of our Annual Awards.

Enjoy the photographs and artwork from our members.

Kids, bring your natural history displays.

And

Back by popular demand is the Natural History Trivia Quiz!

St. Basil's Church is on Maitland Avenue. The entrance is on the (east side (just north of the Queensway).

BUS ACCESS: Bus #85 (along Carling Avenue), get off at Maitland Avenue and walk south on Maitland towards the Queensway for 0.5 km (~ 7 minute walk).

COST: Adults \$12 in advance; \$15 at the door. Children are free.

Coming Events

arranged by the Excursions & Lectures Committee.

For further information,

call the Club number (613-722-3050).

Times stated for excursions are departure times. Please arrive earlier; leaders start promptly. If you need a ride, don't hesitate to ask the leader. Restricted trips will be open to non-members only after the indicated deadlines.

ALL OUTINGS: Please bring a lunch on full-day trips and dress according to the weather forecast and activity. Binoculars and/or spotting scopes are essential on all birding trips. Unless otherwise stated, transportation will be by car pool.

REGISTERED BUS TRIPS: Make your reservation for Club bus excursions by sending a cheque or money order (Payable to The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club) to Box 35069, Westgate P.O., Ottawa, Ontario, K1Z 1A2, at least ten days in advance. Include your name, address, telephone number and the name of the outing. Your cooperation is appreciated by the Committee so that we do not have to wait until the last moment to decide whether a trip should be cancelled due to low registration. In order for the Club to offer a bus trip, we need just over 33 people to register. If fewer than 30 register, we have the option of cancelling the trip or increasing the cost. Such decisions must be done a week in advance, so we encourage anyone who is interested in any bus trip to register as early as possible. We also wish to discourage postponing the actual payment of bus fees until the day of the event.

EVENTS AT THE CANADIAN MUSEUM OF NATURE: The Club is grateful to the Museum for their cooperation, and thanks the Museum for the use of these excellent facilities. Monthly meetings are held in the theatre in the basement. Attendees may have to pay \$5 parking per vehicle.

BIRD STATUS LINE: Phone 613-860-9000 to learn of recent sightings or birding potential in the Ottawa area. To report recent sightings use the 613-860-9000 number and stay on the line. This service is run on behalf of the Birds Committee and is available to members and non-members.

Friday
20 April
7:00 p.m.
to
10:00 p.m.

THE AMPHIBIANS OF GATINEAU PARK

Kid Friendly

Leader: Robert Alvo (A joint venture with Friends of the Gatineau Park)

Meet: Gatineau Park Visitor Centre, 33 Scott Rd., Old Chelsea
The evening will consist of three components. (1) A slide presentation introducing the frog and salamander species of the park, how to identify them, what the eggs look like, the fascinating breeding phenology (early-, mid-, vs. late-season breeding species); 50 minutes. (2) Listening to recordings of the calls of the 10 species of frogs (and toad); 15 minutes. (3) Walking to a vernal pond to listen to the frogs, and entering the pond (optional) to look for frogs, salamanders, and eggs; 1 hour or so. Bring a flashlight or headlamp, and high rubber boots if you wish to go into the pond. Call the Gatineau Park Visitor Centre at (819) 827-2020 to reserve and pay for your spot (\$15 for non-members of the Friends of the Gatineau Park, \$12 for members).

Saturday
21 April
7:00 p.m.
to
10:00 p.m.

OFNC SOIRÉE

Kid Friendly

Location: St. Basil's Church. Enter from Maitland Avenue (east side) just north of the Queensway. **BUS ACCESS:** Bus #85 (along Carling Avenue), get off at Maitland Avenue and walk south on Maitland towards the Queensway for 0.5 km (~ 7 minute walk). Join us for some fun at our annual wine and cheese party and celebrate with the honoured winners of our Annual Awards.

Photographers and artists may exhibit pictures for everyone to enjoy. Kids, bring your natural history displays. Back by popular demand is the Natural History Trivia Quiz!

COST: Adults \$12 in advance; \$15 at the door. Children are free.

Sunday
22 April
1:00 p.m.
to
about
3:30 p.m.

AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES OF SPRING

Kid Friendly

Leaders: Carolyn and David Seburn

Meet: Entrance to the filtration plant on Cassels Road and Britannia Conservation Area (Mud Lake).

Britannia is well known for the diversity of its birds, but it is also home to a number of different amphibians and reptiles. Join herpetologists Carolyn and Dave as we hunt for salamanders and snakes as well as frogs and turtles at Britannia. We will explore a variety of habitats (woods, vernal pools) learning about the life history of these fascinating creatures. Binoculars are recommended for scanning for basking turtles. Rubber boots are suggested for kids (and for those young at heart).

Sunday
22 April
2:00 p.m.
to
about
4:00 p.m.

PLEASE
NOTE
NEW
DATE

RIDEAU CANAL FISH WATCHING

Kid Friendly

Leaders: Hume Douglas, Hedrik Wachelka, and Dr. Steven Cooke or others from Carleton University's Fish Ecology and Conservation Physiology Lab.

Meet: Parking lot of Sunnyside Branch of the Ottawa Public Library, 1049 Bank St.

In April many kinds of fish leave Dow's Lake for the warmer water of the mostly drained canal. Join us for this special chance to watch fish as many begin their courtship and spawning periods. If the weather is warm (unlike last year) we can expect to see Yellow Perch, Pumpkinseed, Bluegill, Largemouth Bass, White Sucker, Common Carp, and possibly also Black Crappie, Muskellunge and others. Bring polarized sunglasses if you have them. More information about research at the Cooke lab can be found at: <http://www.carleton.ca/fecpl/>.

Saturday
5 May
8:00 a.m.
to
about
4:00 p.m.

SPRING IN CONSTANCE BAY

Kid Friendly

Leaders: Jeff and Angela Skevington

Meet: 146 Monty Drive, Constance Bay. To get to Constance Bay, take the 417 to the March Road exit in Kanata. Take March Road several km to Dunrobin Road. Follow Dunrobin Rd. past Dunrobin and Woodlawn to Constance Bay Drive. Follow Constance Bay Drive then take the second right onto Monty; 146 Monty is on your right after about 500 m.

This is a full day outing but you are welcome to come for only the morning if you wish. Bring a lunch and expect to be home by about 4:00 pm. Constance Bay is a lot of fun in the early spring. Early warblers (Pine and Yellow-rumped for example), Common Loon, Red-shouldered Hawk, Eastern Phoebe, Hermit Thrush, and lots of sparrows including Fox, Chipping and White-throated should all be back. If we get a sunny day it should be fun for insect watching too. This is a great time to see early butterflies and other insects that can't be seen the rest of the year. Some of the pussy willows will be loaded with pollinating insects if the day is warm enough. Early season frogs, salamanders and some early season flowers are also possible depending on how advanced the season is.

Sunday

6 May

9:30 a.m.

to

1:30 p.m.

SPRING EPHEMERALS

Leader: Bryarly McEachern

Meet: At the northeast corner of the Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, parking lot off Richmond Road, near the Pizza Pizza.

We will drive 49 km to the Mill of Kintail Conservation Area, where the walk will commence at 10 a.m.

Join Bryarly for a walk through the Mill of Kintail Conservation Area to seek, admire, and examine spring ephemerals. What are spring ephemerals? Happy heralds of verdancy, they are those lovely, short-lived wildflowers that emerge in spring and disappear by early summer. Bring a wildflower guide (e.g. Newcomb's), notebook, and hand lens if you like. Dress appropriately for the weather. We will have lunch at the Conservation Area, so if you plan to stay for the whole trip, please pack a lunch.

This jaunt will run sun or sprinkle, but will be cancelled in the event of heavy rain. If you have any questions about the trip, please email bryarly@gmail.com, or call 613-231-6894.

Tuesday

8 May

7:00 p.m.

Social &

Club business

7:30 p.m.

Formal

program

OFNC MONTHLY MEETING

ADVENTURES WITH THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY

Speakers: Don Davis and Diane Lepage

Location: Canadian Museum of Nature, Metcalfe and McLeod Streets

Diane will set the stage for Don's talk about the Monarch Waystation that our club set up last summer and the one that will be created this summer in the butterfly meadow at the Fletcher Wildlife Garden. This work is supported by a \$15,000 grant that the club received from a contest we entered last year.

Don is a Monarch Butterfly expert and is coming from Toronto to present this talk to our club. He has been studying and tagging Monarch Butterflies as a Citizen Scientist since 1968. He will be describing some of his many experiences in Canada and abroad with this amazing insect, as well as focussing on major conservation issues and opportunities for participation in citizen science projects currently underway.

Thursday

10 May

6:00 a.m.

to

Sunday

13 May

6:00 p.m.

POINT PELEE & RONDEAU BIRDING TRIP

Leaders: Roy John and John Cartwright

Please note: This four day spring birding trip is completely booked; however, we can put you on a waiting list in case of cancellations. Call Fenja at 613-723-2054 or email her at

fbrodo@sympatico.ca if interested. Our next spring Pelee trip will be in 2014.

Saturday
12 May
8:00 a.m.
to
11:00 a.m.

OUTING TO CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD DAY

Leader: Ted Cheskey

Meet: At the entrance to the filtration plant on Cassels Road and Britannia Conservation Area (Mud Lake).

We will celebrate International Migratory Bird Day at our own Important Bird Area, Lac Deschênes

(<http://www.ibacanada.com/site.jsp?siteID=ON112&lang=EN>).

Ted Cheskey is a lifelong birder who works for Nature Canada on the Important Bird Area program. Ted will lead a group around the Mud Lake area. He will put the Lac Deschênes area into an international context and will hopefully show you some great spring birds while doing so.

Saturday
12 May
9:30 a.m.
to
11:30 a.m.

BREWER PARK POND AND MEADOW LIFE

Kid Friendly

Leaders: Hume Douglas and Holly Bickerton

Meet: In the parking lot at Brewer Park near the baseball diamonds at 9:30 a.m. Arriving later is fine: we will be at or near the pond, 100 m south of the parking lot on the other side of a treed embankment. Map link: <http://g.co/maps/gzqnw>.

Come spend time at the edge of Brewer Park pond: frogs, turtles, insects, plants and birds are there to be found. Rubber boots, a net and pail would be useful. This outing is aimed at kids, and those young at heart. The pond is mostly shallow with gradual shorelines. Children should nevertheless be closely supervised, especially because of the deeper nearby Rideau River. The pond area is part of an off-leash area for dogs, but is generally less busy than the river and mown areas.

Monday
14 May
7:00 a.m.
to
11:00 a.m.

NEOTROPICAL MIGRANTS: WARBLERS, VIREOS, ORIOLES, AND TANAGERS

Leader: Ken Allison

Meet: At the entrance to the filtration plant on Cassels Road and Britannia Conservation Area (Mud Lake).

In mid-May, spring migration should be at its peak. This will be a half-day trip that will start at Britannia Conservation Area and might cover some other areas in the west end of Ottawa, depending on where the birds are. Britannia Conservation Area is a locally famous "green oasis" in the city that attracts large numbers of migrants to feed and rest. There will be no "confusing fall warblers" on this trip—most of the birds will be in their full breeding finery. This will also be an opportunity to hear plenty of bird songs. This trip will go rain or shine, so be sure to dress for the weather and remember that it can be cool near the river early in the morning, even in mid-May.

Thursday
17 May
6:30 p.m.
to
8:30 p.m.

AN EVENING WALK IN THE FLETCHER WILDLIFE GARDEN

Leader: Sandy Garland

Meet: At the Interpretive Centre (building 138), Fletcher Wildlife Garden.

This is a lovely time of day to spot interesting wildlife. This general interest walk is one of three (see May 31 and June 7) that will feature the garden and its wildlife. Come and discover the diversity of habitats and wildlife to be found in this small urban wild space, and learn about current projects and initiatives. Attend all three walks, and watch the season unfold in the garden. Bring binoculars and field guides if you have them, and come prepared for the weather and uneven terrain (sturdy shoes).

Tuesday
22 May
7 a.m.
to
11 a.m.

LATER NEOTROPICAL MIGRANTS: WARBLERS, VIREOS, FLYCATCHERS, THRUSHES; AND MORE ORIOLES AND TANAGERS

Leader: Bernie Ladouceur

Meet: At the entrance to the filtration plant on Cassels Road and Britannia Conservation Area (Mud Lake).

Victoria Day is toward the end of the peak of spring migration and we hope to hit a crescendo of bird variety. This will be a half-day trip in the Britannia Conservation Area. We'll target some of the later migrating warblers such as Blackpoll, Canada, and Wilson's Warblers. We'll also try to locate some of the flycatcher and thrush species that are passing through. Red-eyed Vireos and Baltimore Orioles should be present in force and there should still be some of the earlier-migrating warbler species. We'll likely finish by checking out the nearby Ottawa River for water birds. This trip will go rain or shine, so be sure to dress for the weather and remember that it still can be cool near the river early in the morning.

Wednesday

23 May

8:00 a.m.

to

12:30 p.m.

BIRDING IN THE SOUTH END

Leader: Gord Belyea

Meet: Take Albion Road south from Bank Street (approximately 4 km), turn west (right) onto Leitrim Road and proceed for approximately 2 km, turn south (left) on Bowesville Road and continue for about 200 metres to the parking space on the left side of Bowesville Road where the closed portion of High Road meets Bowesville Road.

Rain date:

Thursday

24 May

The fields to the south of the Airport offer one of the most diverse populations of sparrows in the area. We could expect to see Song, Savannah, Field, Chipping, Grasshopper, Vesper, Clay-Coloured, and possibly White-throated and Swamp Sparrows on this walk. Other possibilities include Indigo Buntings, Common Yellowthroat, Yellow Warbler, Bobolinks, Eastern Meadowlark, Tree Swallow, and Black-Billed Cuckoo. There is also an important Bluebird trail in this area. Please note: there are no washroom facilities on this walk.

Saturday

26 May

6:00 a.m.

BIRDING BY EAR: SONGBIRDS IN LAROSE FOREST

Leader: John Cartwright (613-789-6714)

Meet: At Elmvalc Acres Mall (SW corner of Smyth and St. Laurent), near Kelsey's, for carpooling. Those living closer to Limoges can meet us at 7:00 a.m. at the cemetery just south of Clarence-Cambridge Road on Grant Road.

Rain date:

Sunday

27 May

6:00 a.m.

We likely will spend about four hours in the Larose Forest, listening to and observing songbirds. Bring binoculars, a snack, a drink, and plenty of mosquito repellent. This trip will be postponed to Sunday in the event of continuous rain on Saturday.

Thursday

31 May

6:30 p.m.

to

8:30 p.m.

AN EVENING WALK IN THE FLETCHER WILDLIFE GARDEN

Leader: Diane Lepage

Meet: At the Interpretive Centre (building 138), Fletcher Wildlife Garden.

This is a lovely time of day to spot interesting wildlife. This general interest walk is the one of three (see May 17 and June 7) that will feature the garden and its wildlife. Come and discover the diversity of habitats and wildlife to be found in this small urban wild space, and learn about current projects and initiatives. Attend all three walks, and watch the season unfold in the garden. Bring binoculars and field guides if you have them, and come prepared for the weather and uneven terrain (sturdy shoes).

Saturday
2 June
9:30 a.m.
to
12:30 p.m.

ANNUAL NATIVE PLANT SALE AT THE FLETCHER WILDLIFE GARDEN

Location: Near the Interpretive Centre (Building 138), Fletcher Wildlife Garden.

This annual fundraiser is a good opportunity to learn more about native plant gardening, ask questions, get advice and buy plants not often found in local nurseries. Donations of plants native to eastern Ontario are much appreciated. Please bring them—clearly labelled and in pots—to the FWG by Friday, 1 June. Call 613-730-0714 if you need help.

Thursday
7 June
6:30 p.m.
to
8:30 p.m.

AN EVENING WALK IN THE FLETCHER WILDLIFE GARDEN

Leader: Isabelle Nichol

Meet: At the Interpretive Centre (Bldg 138), Fletcher Wildlife Garden.

This is a lovely time of day to spot interesting wildlife. This general interest walk is one of three (see May 17 and May 31) that will feature the garden and its wildlife. Come and discover the diversity of habitats and wildlife to be found in this small urban wild space, and learn about current projects and initiatives. Attend all three walks, and watch the season unfold in the garden. Bring binoculars and field guides if you have them, and come prepared for the weather and uneven terrain (sturdy shoes).

Friday
8 June
to
Sunday
10 June

ONTARIO NATURE AGM AT CHAFFEY'S LOCKS

This year, the Annual General Meeting of Ontario Nature is in eastern Ontario, focusing on the Frontenac Arch and its rich and diverse plant and animal life. Take advantage of the proximity of this event, with hands-on workshops, field trips to protected areas, and social events with naturalists from across Ontario. For more information, visit the Ontario Nature website:
www.ontarionature.org/agm.

Saturday
9 June
7:00 a.m.
to
12:00 noon

BIRDING IN GATINEAU PARK'S PARKWAY SECTOR

Leader: Justin Peter (*jbpetr@yahoo.ca* or 613-858-3744)

Meet: At the Lincoln Fields parking lot off Richmond Road, near Pizza Pizza, or around 7:30 a.m. at Gatineau Park Parking Lot P8, at the corner of Meech Lake Road and the Gatineau Parkway.

We will explore a number of areas by foot, traveling between each by vehicle as we gradually make our way up towards the Eardley Escarpment overlooking the Ottawa Valley. Along the way, we'll look and listen for breeding birds in a variety of habitats, including beaver ponds, meadows, alder and willow thickets, and hardwood forest. We should expect a variety of warblers, vireos, sparrows, flycatchers and more. There is a possibility of observing Indigo Bunting and Scarlet Tanager, as well as both cuckoo species. And who knows what else we might find? Binoculars, a drink and a mid-morning snack are recommended. There will likely be some elevation change so wear sturdy footwear.

Tuesday
June 12
7:00 p.m.
Social &
Club business

**OFNC MONTHLY MEETING
THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING BUG-EATERS**

Speaker: Debbie Badzinski, Bird Studies Canada (BSC)

Location: Canadian Museum of Nature, Metcalfe and McLeod Streets

7:30 p.m.
Formal
program

Across the continent, many species of aerial insectivores (birds that feed on airborne insects) are in decline. Come and learn about this interesting group of birds, and the programs recently established by Bird Studies Canada – Ontario Region to unravel the mysteries behind the declines of three species: Chimney Swifts, Whip-poor-wills and Bank Swallows. Debbie will present preliminary results from population monitoring and habitat assessments, and discuss how interested volunteers can help BSC with data collection.

Saturday
16 June
9:30 a.m.
to
3:30 p.m.

INSECT MACROPHOTOGRAPHY FIELD TRIP/WORKSHOP

Leader: Henri Goulet and Paul Davidson

Meet: Fletcher Wildlife Garden, east side of Prince of Wales Drive, south of the traffic circle.

Henri and Paul are passionate insect photographers with a bundle of tricks for capturing great photos. For this outing we will meet at the Fletcher Wildlife Garden. If the weather is good, we will start outside with a hands-on discussion. If it is not suitable for insect activity we will spend most of time inside. Henri will bring some specimens to use if the weather does not cooperate. We have booked the Fletcher building so that we can go inside for discussions at any time. The leaders will also discuss image processing using images acquired by the group during the outing. Bring your lunch and a camera. Henri and Paul will be using 35mm equipment but they are also experienced using point and shoot cameras and will be able to give advice on them as well. Most cameras allow for macro photography now, and with patience, some great images can be obtained from even inexpensive point and shoot cameras.

Sunday
24 June
8:30 a.m.
to
about
12:00 noon

BOTANY FOR BEGINNERS

Leader: Holly Bickerton

Meet: At the northeast corner of the Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, parking lot off Richmond Road, near the Pizza Pizza. We will drive to the Pinhey Forest along Slack Road (NCC Parking lot P15) for a 9 a.m. start.

All plant enthusiasts are welcome on this walk, and beginners are especially encouraged! We will spend the morning looking at the forest flora in this lovely mixed woods in the southern Greenbelt. Please come prepared for the weather and biting insects, and bring along a snack, field guides, a hand lens if you have one, and questions—there is no final exam!

Saturday
7 July
8:30 a.m.

TWELFTH ANNUAL OTTAWA AREA BUTTERFLY COUNT *Kid Friendly*

Leaders: Jeff Skevington and Peter Hall

Meet: in the parking lot at the intersection of Dwyer Hill Road and March Road (NE of Almonte).

(rain date
Sunday
8 July)

[Call Jeff Skevington between 6-9 pm on Friday night at 613-832-1970 if in doubt about the weather or for specific questions regarding this event.]

[If you need a ride from Ottawa please contact Fenja Brodo (613-723-2054) about carpooling.]

Saturday
7 July
8:30 a.m.

(rain date)
Sunday
8 July)

The North American Butterfly Association has coordinated butterfly counts following the same format as Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) for many years. These counts are published as part of an ongoing program of NABA to census the butterflies of North America (see <http://www.naba.org/counts.html> for more information). Volunteer participants focus on a 24 km diameter circle and conduct a one-day census of all butterflies sighted within that circle. As with CBCs, there is a \$4.00 charge to participants to support the publication of the results (not obligatory, but encouraged). This is the sixth year that OFNC will sponsor a count (and the 12th year that this count will have been conducted). The count area will be centred at Manion Corners (SW of Ottawa), a site used as a former non-OFNC count circle. It includes several important butterfly areas such as the Long Swamp and the Burnt Lands alvar. It is an all-day event so bring your lunch. No experience is necessary! We will put teams together on site and match up people so that everyone has a chance to learn from the experts. If you have binoculars and a butterfly net, bring them along. Butterflies may be captured and brought to the count compilation alive for identification and release. Rubber boots are recommended, as some of the sites have a lot of poison ivy. We plan to meet at The Fletcher Wildlife Garden at 5:30 pm after the count for a compilation and pot luck dinner. Please bring along some food to share plus your own drinks. We will have a collection of butterflies along to help people figure out what they saw and learn a bit more about these amazing creatures. We hope that everyone can make it to the compilation, as it will be a lot of fun; however, if you can't make it, we will get your data in the afternoon before you leave.

Car pooling on excursions is very much encouraged and that is why we usually try to meet at a convenient bus stop with a good place to leave a car unattended for a few hours. Please chip in for gas.

DEADLINE: *Material intended for the July-September issue must be in the editor's hands by 1 May, 2012. Mail your manuscripts to:*

Karen McLachlan Hamilton
2980 Moodie Drive, Nepean, ON, K2J 4S7
H: (613) 838-4943; email: hamilton@storm.ca

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Write up your thoughts and send them to Trail & Landscape.

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